



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 22, 2014  
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### **Public Invited to Comment On Proposed 2014 Smith River Biennial Rule**

-Comments due by Friday, November 21 at 5pm-

(Helena, MT) – Montana State Parks ([stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov)) is seeking public comment on proposed changes to the Smith River State Park and River Corridor Biennial Rule. Public comments will be accepted through Friday, November 21 at 5pm.

The Smith River Biennial Rule sets fees, permit requirements and rules for private, commercial and land-owner float trips on the popular Smith River.

The proposed Smith River Biennial Rule does not include any user fee changes. The Parks Division would like the new Smith River Advisory Council to become better established before proposing user fee increases.

Changes to the Smith River Biennial Rule include the establishment of mandatory food storage to minimize human/black bear conflicts. During the 2013 and 2014 float seasons, a series of human/black bear conflicts were documented that resulted in numerous boat camp closures and the removal of no less than eight black bears. In response to significant public safety concerns, the department chartered an inter-divisional committee that has recommended establishment of food storage regulations on the Smith River as a means of protecting floaters and wildlife. Floaters would be required to provide their own food storage equipment.

The only other proposed change involves elimination of human waste pack-out requirement at the Deep Creek boat camp with installation of a new pit toilet, thereby enhancing public use and enjoyment of this under-utilized boat camp.

The Montana State Parks and Recreation Board authorized the solicitation of public comments at their October 15, 2014 meeting. Comments will be accepted through Thursday, November 21 at 5pm.

To review the proposed biennial rule, go to [stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov) and click on 'Submit Public Comments' in the side-bar navigation. Or by direct link here:

[http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/board/pn\\_0009.html](http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/board/pn_0009.html)

To comment online visit: [stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov) and click on 'Submit Public Comments' in the side-bar navigation. Or by direct link here: [http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/board/pn\\_0009.html](http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/board/pn_0009.html)

Send comments by mail to: Smith River Biennial Rule Comments, Montana State Parks, P.O Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620.

The Smith River State Park and popular river float in the 2012 summer season (May to August) saw a 26% increase in visitation, with 4,125 visitors. Renowned trout fishing is one of the many recreational opportunities that make a float trip on the 59-mile Smith River unforgettable.

*Join us in celebrating Montana State Parks 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2014! Visit Montana State Parks ([stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov)) and enjoy camping, hiking, fishing, swimming, boating and more and discover some of the greatest natural and cultural treasures on earth.*

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